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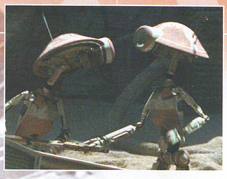
INSIDE:
BOBA FETT



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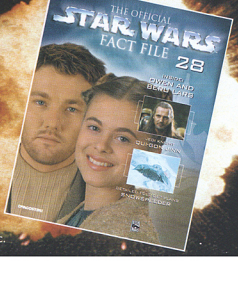
The young moisture farmers who made a living in the harsh Tatooine desert.

SEBULBA

The devious Dug who purchased Anakin's winning Podracer after the Boonta Eve Classic.



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DAGOBAH – CAVE OF EVIL

The remote refuge chosen by Jedi Master Yoda to escape the Emperor's purge.

SENATE DAM DROIDS

The flying recording droids of the Old Republic.

TRAFFIC CONTROLLER DROIDS

Congestion-combatting droids.

LUKE SKYWALKER'S LIGHTSABRE

The Jedi weapon that Luke built from scratch as part of his Jedi training.

SNOWSPEEDER

The modified civilian vehicles used in combat by the Rebel Alliance on Hoth.

to the surgical skill displayed by his master's intricate plotting. True to Sith teachings, Sidious intended that his plans would work like a slow poison.

THE POWERS OF DARKNESS

There were two principal challenges addressed by the Sith strategy that brought about the destruction of the Old Republic; firstly, the machinery of the Republic itself, primarily the Senate, had to be rendered ineffective; secondly, the Jedi Order needed to be destroyed. The trick was that the agent of the Republic's downfall had to remain undetected throughout.

One simple series of events, one direct plan, would not work. Such focused use of the dark side's influence would be almost immediately detected by the Jedi Council. Besides, even the most careful planning can go awry due to unforeseen circumstances. What was required was flexibility to deal with the unforeseen and a degree of intricacy that would diffuse the Sith presence. The Jedi might be able to sense something was wrong, but they would not be able to detect the source.

After years of gathering information and nurturing contacts, Sidious was ready to begin. There were many key organizations in the Old Republic – traders, manufacturers, political groups and so on. Some could be useful, others could be ignored. Some would need monitoring, while others simply had to be destroyed. Of the latter, the Black Sun crime syndicate served a purpose in its destruction.

Darth Sidious used Darth Maul to destroy the Black Sun. A highly effective criminal organization could not be allowed to exist in the shadows that Darth Sidious intended for his own use. In the future, once they had regrouped, the Black Sun might prove useful. Meanwhile, the destruction of the syndicate's rulers was an effective final test of Darth Maul's readiness.

A ➤ A JEDI HUNTS US?: Using Darth Maul's lightsabre skills and fighting prowess, Darth Sidious was able to penetrate and destroy the Black Sun crime syndicate. In the process, Maul confirmed his own worth to the Sith Lord.

'PATIENCE... OUR TIME WILL COME'

32 BBY SIT1

SITH STRATEGY

THE TASK WAS, IN ESSENCE, SIMPLE ENOUGH – TO BRING ABOUT THE OVERTHROW OF THE REPUBLIC AND THE BIRTH OF A NEW ORDER

POISONOUS PLANS: Served by his loyal apprentice, Darth Maul, the Sith Lord Darth Sidious took advantage of the political instability infecting the Galactic Senate in order to implement his own evil schemes.

DARTH Sidious could see that the Republic was in chaos. In his view it was weak. Its government – riddled with petty beings with pathetic desires and limited imagination – was mired in bureaucracy.

Protecting the weak from the strong were the Jedi – the noble guardians of the Republic. With no significant standing military of its own, the Republic turned to the Jedi whenever a crisis loomed.

What was needed was order – a New Order. The clear thinking brought about by studying the Sith way, the perfect rule of the dark side, would unify the galaxy. The wisdom of Sith Lord Darth Bane had established the pattern for the generations of Sith that came after him. Always two, a master and an apprentice – no more, no less.

Darth Sidious worked from the shadows, never striking openly. His apprentice, Darth Maul, was a blunt instrument compared

'AS I HAVE TOLD YOU BEFORE, VICEROY, YOU SERVE YOURSELVES BEST WHEN YOU SERVE ME'

32 BBY SIT3

AGENTS OF THE SITH

THERE WERE MANY IN THE GALAXY WHO WERE AGENTS OF DARTH SIDIOUS. HOWEVER, ONLY VERY FEW WERE AWARE OF THAT FACT, OR OF THEIR ROLE IN BRINGING DOWN THE OLD REPUBLIC

THE destruction of Black Sun served an incidental purpose in a final exercise for Darth Maul as he graduated from his training. Other such groups, powerful enough perhaps to cause a problem in the future, could be set against each other to further Sidious' grand plan. The Yinchorri were a perfect example.

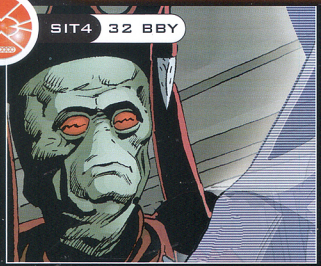
A vicious saurian species, the stubbornly fearless Yinchorri were immune to Force mind control. To deal with this threat, Sidious simply used them to probe the ability of the Jedi Council and the Republic when tackling a significant military threat. Setting the Yinchorri on the warpath, through the efforts of a go-between, was simplicity itself. The simple-mindedly vicious saurians were even assisted in attacking the Jedi Temple itself. The result was a rattled Senate and a Jedi Order mourning the loss of many of its own. The Yinchorri were defeated and brought under control.

Darth Sidious understood the need for flexibility in his plans. All possible contingencies had to be allowed for. The advantage of having to operate through hand-picked agents was that new plans could be easily enacted with no one save Sidious ever being aware of the final purpose.

One of the most powerful tools available to Darth Sidious was the Republic's supreme political institution, the Senate. His contacts there allowed the Sith Lord access to many individuals whose ambitions and beliefs were suited to his purposes, both immediate and in the future.

Senatorial contact with the Jedi Temple and its much-vaunted Council threw up troubled Jedi whose strengths and weaknesses could be useful. While Quinlan Vos proved a disappointment, his struggles with his own darkness were a useful distraction for the High Council. It mattered not – there was another in the

SIT4 32 BBY



Jedi ranks who was perfect for what Sidious had in mind.

In the meantime, the Neimoidian delegates to the Senate demonstrated a transparent avarice that could be more immediately exploited.

UNEASY ALLIES

The Trade Federation was a powerful organization whose exploitation of their trade franchises brought them riches and influence. They were a potential threat, but also a useful tool.

Sidious knew that, at some stage, a large military force would be required to directly challenge and cripple the combined might of the Jedi Order and the New Republic. Equally, such a conflict would need to disguise the build-up of the armed forces required by the New Order when it finally took over from the Republic. The Dark Lord saw the greedy Neimoidians as the perfect tool to allow sufficient cover for the practical research and testing of the armed forces Sidious sought. Furthermore, they would be useful politically.

The Trade Federation had long complained that pirate attacks made their work dangerous and expensive. Regulations meant that they could not legally arm themselves sufficiently to deal with those attacks. Within the Trade Federation itself, the Neimoidian faction, led by Viceroy Nute Gunray, sought the dominance they felt they deserved. It didn't take much to make Gunray an agent of Darth Sidious.

The Sith Lord engineered a conflict with a minor Outer Rim pirate group (through another agent working with the pirates) that created sympathy within the Senate for the Trade Federation position. A stronger Trade Federation led to the need for an emergency trade summit on Eriadu, during which Sidious' agents assassinated the Federation's leaders, all save the Neimoidians, right under the noses of the Jedi. At the same time, on Coruscant, the Supreme Chancellor of the Senate was being implicated in corrupt dealings taking advantage of the Eriadu summit.

◄ IS THAT LEGAL?: Darth Sidious manipulated the Trade Federation and its Neimoidian representative, Viceroy Nute Gunray, in his attempts to gain a foothold in the galaxy's already delicate power structure. With the Viceroy as his ally, Sidious could directly influence events.

Now permitted to arm themselves, the Neimoidian-controlled Trade Federation were put in touch with a number of arms dealers, including the Geonosians. Their hive-based society was comfortably familiar to the Neimoidians, and the weapons the Geonosians created appealed to Sidious.

Having probed his enemies, and having forces in place that needed testing, Sidious was ready to initiate the first large-scale action of his plans. He also needed to move up a step politically. The Neimoidians would unknowingly assist in both cases, and at the same time their potential as a future threat would be ended. The stage for this act in the unfolding drama was the hitherto peaceful world of Naboo...

22 BBY FET9

"YOU'RE BETTER THAN I WAS AT YOUR AGE, AND BY A LONG WAY. AND IF YOU KEEP WORKING HARD, YOU'LL BE THE BEST BOUNTY HUNTER THIS GALAXY'S EVER SEEN'

BOBA FETT

BOBA FETT, THE CLONE SON OF JANGO FETT, IS WITHOUT DOUBT THE FINEST BOUNTY HUNTER THE GALAXY HAS EVER KNOWN

DURING the time of the Empire, Boba Fett worked as a licensed bounty hunter, taking on Imperial commissions and completing them with utterly ruthless efficiency. Yet even his worst enemies admitted that he did not kill or torture for sport – unlike the Hutts for whom he also often worked.

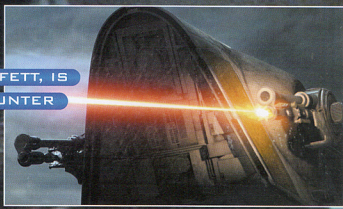
Legend and conjecture surround the early part of Boba's career. Not only did he wear Mandalorian armour very similar to his father Jango's, but he quickly became so famous that Boba Fett wannabes and impersonators abounded throughout the galaxy.

Boba was always aware that he was Jango's clone, but that just made him more determined to live up to the high standards his father set. In turn, Jango was convinced that his son would exceed him, both in skill and in reputation.

Boba's promise showed early, when he and his father had to flee from Kamino to escape from the Jedi Knight Obi-Wan Kenobi. Jango and Obi-Wan fought on a landing platform at Tipoca City, while Boba watched from the cockpit of *Slave I*. Choosing his moment, Boba fired the ship's lasers at the Jedi, helping Jango to escape.

Despite this, Obi-Wan Kenobi pursued them to their destination – the red planet of Geonosis. In the chase through the asteroid belt that followed, Boba learned the first of the hundreds of tricks that would sustain him through his long career.

The Jedi Knight was a worthy adversary, but father and son eventually levelled their opponent in a concussion bomb barrage – or so they thought. Instead of firing himself, Jango



A FROM FATHER TO SON: Among the many things Boba Fett inherited from his father, Jango, was the starship *Slave I*. This vessel would serve Boba well throughout his illustrious career as a bounty hunter.

CHARACTER DATA

SPECIES:	HUMAN CLONE
HEIGHT:	1.83 METRES
HOMEWORLD:	KAMINO
AFFILIATION:	BOUNTY HUNTER
VEHICLE:	*SLAVE I*
WEAPON:	MANDALORIAN BATTLE ARMOUR EE-3 BLASTER RIFLE

gently folded Boba's hand over the trigger, hoping to let him claim his first kill. Obi-Wan, however, survived the attack, but, to Boba, that was far less important than the look of pride he saw on his father's face.

That look stayed with him in the years following his father's subsequent death in the battle on Geonosis – years when he learned that what mattered was survival, fulfilling his contracts, and turning a profit.

DISTRESS CALL

Boba obtained a few nice bounties aboard *Slave I* – Chung, the Ubuugan, whom Boba had to deliver alive, and Tsumo, whom he could deliver alive or dead. While on route to collect the bounties on these two fugitives, Boba received a distress call from the starship *Mingula*. Distress calls meant one thing to Boba – a chance for salvage. Accordingly, he was delighted to find the *Mingula* adrift in space and apparently totally deserted.

There was no point in taking chances, and so Boba forced Tsumo to walk ahead of him through the corridors of the ship. Soon, they found a vast hangar full of cargo. Tsumo begged Boba to let him go, on the grounds that the bounty hunter was going to be very rich from the profits the cargo would yield. But Boba would never risk his reputation by letting a target go. Besides, there was no such thing in his opinion as 'enough credits'.

There was far too much cargo for Boba to assess quickly, but a death casket eventually caught his eye. He opened it, and found a mummified figure bearing a valuable amulet. Exploring further, Boba found the vessel's crew – all dead, and with strange insects crawling in boils on their skin. The creatures broke out of the corpses' skin, and, within minutes, had eaten into Tsumo's flesh, killing him.

Boba was saved by his armour – but the creatures excreted a corrosive that would eventually burn through and kill him. He raced to an airlock and burned most of the bugs off himself, ejecting the rest into space. But the heat generated now threatened to blow the *Mingula*'s power cells. Boba ejected himself through the waste disposal unit, and, via a remote, summoned *Slave I* to pick him up.

But Boba's ordeal wasn't over – the bugs were now on *Slave I*. Knowing they would go for the nearest host, Chung, Boba raced to protect him – only to discover that the insects were Ubuugan fleshborers. Chung's species had evolved alongside them and regarded them as a delicacy. To Boba's surprise, Chung calmly sat eating them! Boba had lost the big prize, and his fee for Tsumo. But he had survived, and the amulet would more than compensate for his losses.

A YOUNG SOLDIER OF FORTUNE: At an early age, Boba showed great strength under pressure. Having seen his father, Jango, killed on the planet Geonosis, he soon learned the ways of the bounty hunter's world and began wearing Mandalorian battle armour to increase his effectiveness.

3 BBY FET11

"HE DOES NOT FEAR THE DARK LORD, BUT ONLY A FOOL SEEKS CLOSE COMBAT WITH DARTH VADER"

FUTURE TENSE

BOBA FETT WORKED FOR DARTH VADER MANY TIMES, AND FOR THE MOST PART HE TREATED THE SITH LORD WITH GREAT RESPECT. YET ON AT LEAST ONE OCCASION, THE TWO FOUGHT – WITH NEAR CATASTROPHIC CONSEQUENCES

DARTH Vader had summoned Boba to his Star Destroyer, and gave him a bounty to pursue. Colonel Karda had murdered his superior officer, General Nim, and run off with a sealed container. Boba was to eliminate Karda and return the container to Darth Vader, unopened.

As Boba set off, he realised that Vader had planted a tracking device on *Slave I*. Aware that he was being followed, he went to Karda's last known location – Port-Esta on the planet Vestar. There, some members of Karda's outfit told Boba that Karda had developed a method for permanently killing the Icarii, who were able to regenerate even if they were dismembered. Karda had kept a tribal wisewoman, Selestrina, alive. She wore her tribe's entire fortune as jewels in her hair, and she had forseen her people's downfall.

Boba tracked Karda to Star Station 12. There he discovered that Karda had disguised himself with the facial tattoos of the Duhma tribe. Boba also faced down one of the gang that was following him. The lowlife revealed that Darth Vader had told them to wait until Boba had the container, and then they were to kill him.

Boba eliminated the informant, but ignored the rest, and went on with his job. His disguise made it easy for him to discover that Karda had left on the spaceliner *Orammas*. Boba intercepted it, and for a small

A ➤ YOU WILL FIND HIM FOR ME: Asked by Darth Vader to find the Imperial deserter Colonel Karda, Boba Fett knew he had to be cautious. His suspicions of the Dark Lord were later confirmed when he learned that Vader planned to have him killed.

FET12 3 BBY

bribe, a crewman revealed that Karda had said he would be leaving the ship at Maryx Minor. That shouldn't have been possible – yet the *Orammas* had managed to stop there for essential repairs.

On Maryx Minor, Boba soon found out that Karda had headed into the wastes, and deduced that he must have gone to the only habitation for miles around – the hermitage of the Ancient Order of Pessimists. Boba followed him, but before he got to the monastery, he met with the gang that had been tailing him, and they met with the business end of his blaster.

That annoyance dealt with, Boba continued to the monastery, where he was confronted by a pathetic little monk who threatened to drop stones on him. Evidently, Karda was coercing the monk. This was not Boba's problem, and he put the monk out of his misery.

Boba found Karda inside, and read out the warrant authorizing the hunt. The fight was short – Karda was a pathetic opponent. At the last, his body toppled into the lava pool the monks used as a burial place.

Boba took the container and opened it. Inside, as he had suspected, was the living head of Selestrina the wisewoman, her hair still decorated with her tribe's jewels. She told him that Karda had kept her alive to prophesy for him. She had ingested poison, but Karda had decapitated her before her brain rotted. She asked Boba if he would like to know his future. The bounty hunter knew what she would be worth to others.

Darth Vader arrived, and the two men fought ferociously. In the end, the Sith Lord had Boba Fett at bay against the lip of a cliff above the lava pool. Vader summoned the Force, and the bounty hunter fell toward the lava pool.

Heat seared him, but fortunately his rocket pack kicked in. He soared up and away from the cliffs, but the Dark Lord was unstoppable. Boba Fett distracted him in the only possible way – by kicking his prize, the head of Selestrina, into the lava pool. As he sped away, Boba glimpsed, he thought, Vader using the Force to catch the container.

Later, on *Slave I*, Boba contemplated the wonder and misery of knowing the future. It did not seem to have done Karda any good, and he doubted Vader would fare any better from it. As for him, he had a fortune in Icarii jewels that he had snatched from Selestrina's hair…

▲ ▶ I SEE FETT AND BEHIND HIM ANOTHER DARK PRESENCE: Fett soon learned that the true purpose of Vader's commission was not to capture Colonel Karda – who had now disguised himself with facial tattoos – but to recover the disembodied head of Selestrina, an Icarii wisewoman who was said to have the ability to predict the future.

▼ A HONOURS SHARED: After his retreat from Vader and the loss of Selestrina's head, Boba comforted himself with the knowledge that he had in his possession the valuable Icarii jewels that Selestrina had worn in her hair.

'BOBA FETT FOLLOWED NO CREATURE'S RULES BUT HIS OWN'

1 ABY FET13

A HUNTER ALONE

BOBA FETT WAS OFTEN EMPLOYED BY THE IMPERIALS AS A BOUNTY HUNTER, AND CHOSE NOT TO BELONG TO THE BOUNTY HUNTERS' GUILD. IF ANYTHING, HE FELT CONTEMPT FOR THEIR RULES AND THE NEEDS THAT HAD BROUGHT THEM TOGETHER

BOBA Fett accepted a commission to infiltrate the Guild and destroy it. He had beaten two rather inept Guild hunters, Bossk – an old rival – and his partner, Zuckuss, to a bounty. When Boba delivered his quarry to his contact, Ku'dar Mu'bat – a strange, spider-like alien – he was offered the job. He accepted, though he did not know then who was behind it.

He went to the Guild station under the pretence of joining. The head of the Guild, Bossk's father, Cradossk, welcomed him, but the younger hunters were greatly displeased with his decision to join.

Once a part of the Guild, Boba assembled a team of hunters, including his old friend, the cyborg D'harhan, to go after Oph Nar Dinnid. The Lyunesi had a huge bounty on his head. The trail led to a clan of Shell Hutts for whom Dinnid hoped to work – but by the time Boba got there, one of the Hutts had killed Dinnid in a fit of rage. In the bloodshed that inevitably followed, D'harhan was killed. Zuckuss reported that Bossk had also been killed. Cradossk was pleased – he had been about to initiate a purge anyway. But Bossk reappeared out of nowhere and tore his hapless father apart. The result was exactly what Fett had been employed to engineer – the Guild was split in two along age lines.

◄ONE-MAN ARMY: As his notoriety grew throughout the galaxy, Boba Fett's Mandalorian battle armour and EE-3 blaster rifle became his trademarks. The armour originated with a group of mercenaries – the Mandalorians – who were defeated by the Jedi Knights decades before the Clone Wars. Fett modified the armour to his own specifications and added extras such as knee-pad rocket dart launchers.

FET14 1 ABY

Despite their long-standing rivalry, Fett and Bossk teamed up to trap Trhin Voss'on't – a renegade Imperial stormtrooper who had killed his crew and absconded with secret encryption codes – by making it look as if Bossk had managed to kill both Zuckuss and Fett, and now wanted to team up with Voss'on't. This unlikely scheme worked up to a point, but Voss'on't eventually caught on. Boba and Bossk managed to capture him, but he triggered an earthquake device and injured both bounty hunters badly.

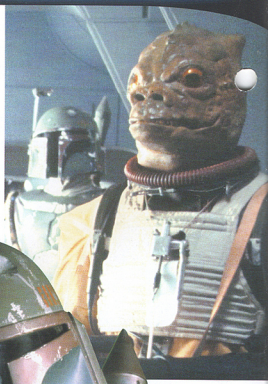
A resentful Bossk tried to take revenge on Boba for his part in the Guild's destruction – but Boba, aided by Zuckuss, got the drop on him. The alliance was a brief one, for Boba, still in the employ of Mu'bat, turned the tables on both of them. They barely made it out of *Slave I* alive.

ATTACK AT MU'BAT'S WEB

Boba took Voss'on't to Mu'bat's web, accompanied the whole way by the renegade Imperial's taunts. Boba ignored them, but when he dropped out of hyperspace, *Slave I* was immediately attacked. Faced with two alternatives – flee or fight his attacker – Boba found a third. He put *Slave I* between his assailant and Mu'bat's web – then ploughed the ship straight into Mu'bat.

The arachnoid alien was terribly wounded, but refused to pay Boba, informing him that he had not set the bounty. Boba then realized that it had been set by his attacker, whom he had identified as Prince Xizor, the infamous underlord of Black Sun. Mu'bat told Boba that Xizor was also the one behind the plan to break up the Guild. When the crime lord arrived, Boba captured him, only to find that Xizor had negotiated a deal with Balancesheet, a now renegade subsystem of Mu'bat's that had declared its own autonomy.

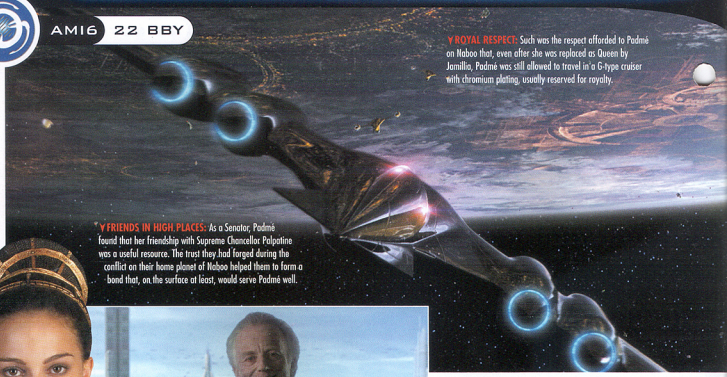
Xizor did at least pay the bounty on Voss'on't. All Boba could do was limp away in his damaged ship. That was when he realized that Balancesheet had played a last trick – he had taken half the bounty to cover 'expenses'. For that, Boba vowed, there would be a reckoning.



➢ **HUNTING THE HUNTER:** A long-standing rival of Boba Fett's was the Tradoshan bounty hunter, Bossk. Son of Cradossk, the head of the Bounty Hunters' Guild, Bossk was hugely ambitious and ended up killing his own father when the Guild was split in two as a result of Fett's duplicity.

▼ **GETTING AHEAD:** The Mandalorian armour, modified by Fett, included a helmet with a macrobinocular viewplate, motion and sound sensors, infrared capabilities, a broadband antenna and a comlink with his ship, *Slave I*.

AM16 22 BBY



▼ROYAL RESPECT: Such was the respect afforded to Padmé on Naboo that, even after she was replaced as Queen by Jamillia, Padmé was still allowed to travel in a G-type cruiser with chromium plating, usually reserved for royalty.

▼FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES: As a Senator, Padmé found that her friendship with Supreme Chancellor Palpatine was a useful resource. The trust they had forged during the conflict on their home planet of Naboo helped them to form a bond that, on the surface at least, would serve Padmé well.

however, that Padmé's political career was far from over.

Queen Jamillia, Padmé's successor, recognized that Padmé was a hugely popular figure and a highly talented diplomat. She asked Padmé to stay on in government, becoming Naboo's representative in the Galactic Senate on Coruscant.

SENATORIAL LIFE

Padmé knew that the life of a Senator could be deeply stressful. Palpatine, the Supreme Chancellor of the Galactic Senate, had once represented Naboo in the same role that was now being offered to Padmé. The stress of political life in the rapidly fragmenting Republic had visibly aged him, and he had become prone to withdrawing for long periods of reflective solitude.

Padmé's mother and father, Jobal and Ruwee, had shared their daughter's relief when her term as Queen came to an end. When she announced her decision to become a Senator, all their anxieties returned. The call of duty had once more taken priority over any personal concerns, and the gentle, selfless Padmé prepared herself to become an ambassador for the planet she loved.

Senator Amidala found a useful ally in the benevolent Supreme Chancellor, and the two built on the trust and friendship that had been forged during the conflict on their home planet.

Padmé adapted well to all the other aspects of Senatorial life, travelling to diplomatic missions aboard her G-type custom-built Royal Cruiser. As a measure of the esteem in which she was held by Queen Jamillia, the ship had a reflective chromium-plated hull of the type usually found only on royal ships.

Padmé's passionate belief in democracy came to the fore when the Republic became threatened by Count Dooku's separatist movement. During meetings in the Senate, Padmé noticed the growing number of empty spaces with mounting dismay. Star system after star system declared its intention to abandon the Republic, preferring instead to side with a campaign that threatened the very foundation of a democracy that had prospered for 2,000 years. For the first time, the ideals that Padmé held most dear were coming under threat.

'TOO LITTLE YOU WORRY ABOUT YOURSELF, SENATOR, AND TOO MUCH ABOUT POLITICS'

22 BBY AMI5

THE CALL OF DUTY

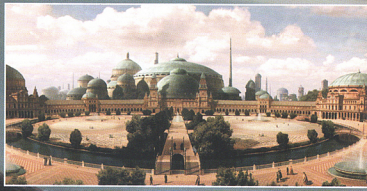
THE BURDEN OF RESPONSIBILITY FORCED THE YOUNG PADMÉ AMIDALA TO BECOME AN ASTUTE AND SOPHISTICATED POLITICIAN, BUT THE TRIALS OF LIFE AWAY FROM THE MONARCHY PROVED JUST AS ARDUOUS

PADMÉ served two four-year terms as the elected Queen of Naboo. The heavy burden of responsibility made the young Queen wise beyond her years, preparing her to withstand the Trade Federation's blockade, and subsequent invasion, of her peaceful world.

The youthful Queen bravely led the resistance against the invaders, and forged an historic alliance with Naboo's indigenous Gungans. When Naboo emerged victorious, the people's respect and love for their ruler only grew. But she could not stay Queen forever. The constitution of Naboo decreed that an elected monarch could serve no more than two terms, and Padmé was obliged to step down. The reign of Queen Amidala was over when she was aged just 22.

It is a measure of the Queen's popularity that many of her subjects favoured amending the constitution so that she could stay on, but Padmé could never have approved of such a measure. Her duty to her planet and her people was unshakeable, and that extended to her faith in democracy.

In private, Padmé felt a sense of relief when her reign came to an end, and she looked forward to devoting some time to the things she felt she had missed out on. She dreamed of having a boyfriend, and maybe one day marrying and raising a family. Visits home and the company of her sister's children reminded her that there was more to life than politics. It soon transpired,



A NABOO QUEEN: As Queen of Naboo, Padmé spent much of her time in the Royal Palace at Theed. From there, she ruled with a wisdom and benevolence that gained her huge respect among her people. When the Trade Federation invaded the planet, Padmé stood firm and, with help from the Gungans, repelled the invaders. This served to increase still further the affection with which she was regarded.

'AT ALL COSTS, WE DO NOT WANT WAR!'

22 BBY AMI7

A CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

PADMÉ HAD SPENT MUCH OF HER CHILDHOOD AND ALL HER ADULT LIFE SERVING OTHERS. HER DEVOTION TO THE REPUBLIC WAS SINCERE, AND HER ANGUISH WHEN IT WAS THREATENED WAS ALL-CONSUMING

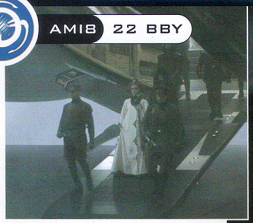
AS cracks began to appear in the structure of the Republic, Padmé shared the frustration of numerous other like-minded Senators. Unlike many of her colleagues, however, she remained convinced that the situation could be resolved through political negotiation and diplomacy. Ask Aak, the Senator of Malastare, and Darsana, the Ambassador of Glee Anselm, were among those lobbying for the creation of an army of the Republic.

There had been mounting speculation that an armed attack could overwhelm the peace-keeping Jedi assigned to protect the Republic. This was why some Senators had begun pressing for the creation of a security force, but Padmé opposed the idea on the grounds that such a move would only be interpreted as an act of war. The Military Creation Act was nevertheless drafted, and Senator Amidala travelled to Coruscant to take part in the crucial debate preceding a vote.

Captain Panaka had since assumed duties with Queen Jamillia, so Padmé's bodyguard for the trip to Coruscant was his cousin, Captain Typho. The Captain had insisted that Padmé changed places with a decoy handmaiden before leaving Naboo. This was a well-practised tactic, familiar to Padmé from her days as Queen. When the Royal Cruiser touched down on the landing platform, it was the handmaiden Cordé, not Padmé, who emerged dressed as the Senator for Naboo. Padmé travelled separately, disguised as the pilot of one of the ship's escort fighters.

YOU'RE STILL IN DANGER HERE: On their arrival outside the Galactic Senate, Padmé's protector, Captain Typho, warned the Senator to be cautious. Shortly after he declared that there was no danger, an assassin's bomb exploded, destroying the Royal Cruiser.

AMIB 22 BBY



A ➢ SABOTAGE: Cordé was disguised as Padmé when she disembarked from the Royal Cruiser. Seconds later, a huge bomb destroyed the ship and claimed the handmaiden's life. Seven members of the Senator's entourage perished in the unsuccessful attempt on Padmé's life, but, having heard her faithful handmaiden's dying words, Padmé still found the courage to address the fractious Senate.

Moments after arriving on Coruscant, the unthinkable happened, and a huge explosion tore the cruiser apart. A saboteur's bomb had been rigged to detonate as the airlock opened, but a last-minute change in the depressurization procedure meant that, instead, it went off soon after. The ship was destroyed, and Padmé's decoy was caught in the blast.

With tears welling in her eyes, Padmé rushed over to her stricken handmaiden and strained to hear Cordé's dying words. Cordé remained devoted to her mistress, and apologized for failing her before she died in Padmé's arms.

A SENATOR'S RESOLVE

Seven people had died in the attack, and the distraught Padmé could barely comprehend the devastation. Yet she had to regain her composure when Captain Typho reminded her that Cordé had done her duty – it was now time for Padmé to do hers. Drawing upon the strength that had seen her through the invasion of Naboo, a determined Padmé headed for the Senate. There was work to be done.

While Padmé steeled herself for the coming debate, Supreme Chancellor Palpatine heard that she had been assassinated and announced the tragic news in the Senate Chamber. Following a stunned silence, Senator Orn Free Taa emerged in his pod, and highlighted the Senator's death as another reason why the Republic needed more security.

Mas Ameeda was busily try to calm things down when Padmé manoeuvred her pod into the centre of the huge rotunda, astonishing all present. Padmé had seized the Senate's attention, and wasted no time in using it to plead her case. She argued that she had not been the target of the assassination attempt, but that the bomb had in fact been used to influence the outcome of the debate over the new security measure.

Padmé remembered the misery of war, and was furious that someone in the Senate seemed determined that an army be created. Her speech was a typically selfless gesture at a time when Padmé's life was so clearly under threat, but nothing was going to get in the way of her impassioned plea. She begged the Senators not to let fear push them into an unwise decision that she felt would lead to war. Her efforts were met with derision, and as boos and groans echoed around the rotunda, the Supreme Chancellor decreed that the Senate be adjourned.

An exhausted Padmé headed for the Supreme Chancellor's quarters and walked into the middle of another debate. Palpatine had been joined by Senator Bail Organa and various members of the Jedi Council. Palpatine strongly suggested that Padmé needed more security, and Padmé inwardly groaned at the prospect of yet more bodyguards getting in her way. She protested, but eventually gave in.

The Supreme Chancellor proposed that Obi-Wan Kenobi would be a wise choice for the task, and Council member Mace Windu agreed. Obi-Wan reported to Senator Amidala's apartment that evening. Padmé thought he looked older and more composed, and noticed that he now sported a thick beard. She also noticed that he was not alone.

A A NEW GUARDIAN: Following the assassination attempt on the landing platform, a concerned Supreme Chancellor recommended that Padmé be placed under the protection of Jedi Knight Obi-Wan Kenobi.

Her face lit up in delighted surprise as she recognized the nervous-looking Padawan accompanying Obi-Wan. It was Anakin Skywalker, her old friend from Tatooine. The small boy she had last seen ten years before had grown into a lean and handsome young man...

A JEDI BODYGUARD: Padmé was delighted to be reunited with Obi-Wan Kenobi, and pleasantly surprised to discover that, since their last meeting ten years earlier, Anakin had grown into a handsome and charismatic young man.

'MARA JADE CAN BE RESOURCEFUL IN WAYS YOU ARE NOT, LORD VADER'

4 ABY MAR 1

MARA JADE SKYWALKER

RAISED AND GROOMED TO BE THE EMPEROR'S PERSONAL ENVOY, MARA JADE COULD HEAR PALPATINE'S VOICE WHEREVER SHE TRAVELLED

MARA JADE'S fiery and tempestuous personality was matched by her flame-red hair. Slim and lithe, intelligent and astute, she was one of the most formidable people ever to serve Emperor Palpatine. Regarded by many as a mere dalliance of the Emperor, Jade was in fact one of his most powerful aides. She was one of the 'Emperor's Hands', a select group of individuals who answered directly – and only – to Palpatine.

Mara Jade has little memory of her family or where she was raised during the first years of her life. Her first real remembrance is of Palpatine himself arriving at her home to take her away.

EMPEROR'S APPRENTICE

From that time on, Jade's life was dedicated to honing and polishing her skills and abilities. In particular, she was groomed in the complex lores of diplomacy and social etiquette, as well as receiving training in an eclectic mix of combat techniques and use of the Force. By her late teens she had become a redoubtable and resourceful young woman – the perfect cipher for the Emperor.

One of the key advantages of Mara Jade was her anonymity – only a select few understood her true role. As a result, she could go to places and do things that no other member of the Emperor's coterie ever dreamt of doing.

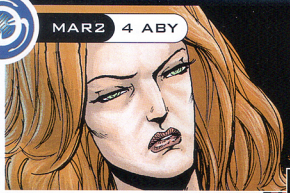
Some of her missions simply involved relaying orders or overseeing Imperial operations, but other assignments were more covert. She uncovered the whereabouts of many of the remaining Jedi – it was she that located the Dark Woman, whom Darth Vader later dispatched. Similarly, following Vader's encounter with Luke Skywalker on Bespin, the Emperor ordered Jade to kill the young Jedi herself, and while posing as a dancing girl in Jabba's Palace she almost succeeded.

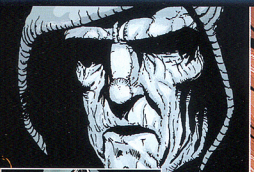
For Mara, the Emperor was a person to be feared, but he was also something of a father figure to her and he would often be

CHARACTER DATA

SPECIES:	HUMAN
HEIGHT:	1.6 METRES
HOMEWORLD:	UNKNOWN
AFFILIATION:	NEW REPUBLIC
VEHICLE:	*HUNTER'S LUCK, JADE'S FIRE, JADE'S SABRE*
WEAPON:	LIGHTSABRE BLASTER PISTOL

MAR2 4 ABY





YOU WILL KILL LUKE SKYWALKER: As the Emperor's trusted aide, Mara Jade had been instructed in the ways of the Force. It was her connection to the Force that revealed to her a vision of Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader turning on the Emperor and killing him – an act for which she was sworn to take revenge.

AT ONE ESCAPES SHE COULD DO UNTOLD DAMAGE TO THE EMPIRE: One of Mara Jade's chief rivals on the Imperial Court was Admiral Isaard, who imprisoned her on Coruscant. Mara, however, managed to escape.

kindly and attentive. Following some of her most successful missions, the Emperor would even ask Mara to take time away and enjoy herself, a command he would never relay to his other servants. Despite this, Palpatine was also quite deceitful with Mara. He led her to believe that she was the only person who acted as an extension of his will, when in fact there were a number of other Emperor's Hands.

It was after a failed attempt to eliminate the Black Nebula crime syndicate that Mara Jade learnt of the Emperor's passing. She felt the impact of his death tearing its way through the Force, literally knocking her to the ground. At the same time she received a vision of Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader turning on the Emperor with their lightsabres and destroying him. As she felt the Emperor's life ebb away she heard a screamed injunction: 'YOU WILL KILL LUKE SKYWALKER!'

It was in this state of extreme distress that Mara was discovered by the ambitious Admiral Isaard – one of her rivals at the Imperial Court – and thrown into a cell. Despite this treatment, Mara was able to escape both the prison and Coruscant within a matter of days, but then began to lose her focus and direction. She fled to the planet Phorliss, where she was taken in by the owner of a local cantina – a kindly creature called Gorb Drig. He gave her a room and employed her to work as a barmaid, treating her almost like a daughter. Sadly, Mara's time there was cut short when Drig was attacked and killed by members of Black Nebula.

The attack gave Mara a new focus, and in the following weeks she completed her earlier mission to wipe out Black Nebula. That done, she again began to drift, shifting aimlessly from planet to planet, hooking up with the occasional group of smugglers or bandits before moving on. Mara's very reason for being had been destroyed, and she desperately needed to find a new direction.

YOU'RE HIRED: Arriving on the planet Phorliss, Mara Jade was taken in by a kindly cantina owner named Gorb Drig. Unfortunately, he was later killed by Black Nebula.

'YOU WILL KILL LUKE SKYWALKER!'

9 ABY MAR3

A NEW DIRECTION

WITH THE DEATH OF PALPATINE, MARA JADE'S DESTINY WAS THROWN INTO DOUBT. THE NEXT TEN YEARS OF HER LIFE WERE SPENT TRYING TO DISCOVER A NEW PATH FOR HERSELF AND HER UNIQUE ABILITIES

MARA JADE had spent the years following the Battle of Endor wandering aimlessly across the galaxy. Then, four-and-a-half years later, she was living on Tropis when two safari hunters employed her. Unbeknown to her, one of these hunters was Talon Karrde, who had come to control much of the galaxy's smuggling operation after Jabba the Hutt's demise. After she rescued him and his companion from a little local difficulty, Karrde asked Mara if she would work for him.

It was not long before Karrde's work brought him into contact with certain key members of the New Republic, as well as Grand Admiral Thrawn, one of the Empire's most fearsome military tacticians.

During this period, Mara had her first face-to-face encounter with Luke Skywalker. From the start of their relationship she declared her intention to kill him, yet repeatedly failed to do so. Over and over, the two were thrust into dangerous situations and forced to rely on each other to survive.

In the Force-repelling forests of Myrkr, they spent days traversing the dangerous terrain, protecting each other from Imperials and the planet's native beasts. Following that episode, and their defeat of Thrawn's forces on that planet, Mara asked Luke to help rescue Talon Karrde. Thrawn had captured the smuggling chief when Mara led Imperial forces to their secret hideout. Later, during the battle for the Katana Fleet, Mara had to eject from her damaged spacecraft. Luke eventually found her ejection pod, and Mara recuperated at the former Imperial Palace on Coruscant. Then, in their final encounter with the crazed Jedi Master Joruus C'Baoth, the fates of the two Force-users were again intertwined.

COME IN MARA: During the years after Palpatine's death, Mara wandered aimlessly around the galaxy until she met Talon Karrde, a highly placed smuggler, and was invited to join his organization.

A STAY RIGHT THERE: It was while working with Talon Karrde that Mara Jade first encountered Luke Skywalker face to face. She had vowed to kill the young Jedi at the time of her vision of Palpatine's death.

MAR4 9 ABY

YOU DESTROYED MY LIFE: On meeting Luke Skywalker, Mara immediately found it difficult to maintain her conviction that she should kill the young Jedi. Indeed, in this and many subsequent encounters, Luke proved immensely useful to her. Before long, the two Force-users had settled their differences.

It was this last battle with the clone of Luke Skywalker that finally gave Mara the cathartic release she had been searching for all these years. She finally understood that she had been used and manipulated by the Emperor, and with that realization she started to come to terms with her past. She began to understand that she, not the Emperor, was responsible for her destiny.

Following the death of Grand Admiral Thrawn, Mara Jade and Luke Skywalker – differences more or less resolved – parted company. He went on to fight the cloned Emperor and establish the Jedi academy on Yavin 4. She rejoined Talon Karrde and began working with him on his fledgling Smuggler's Alliance, nurturing and supporting it in its first uneasy steps. After a couple of years, Mara had become highly respected in smuggling circles, and Karrde decided that he could eventually retire and pass the reins on to her.

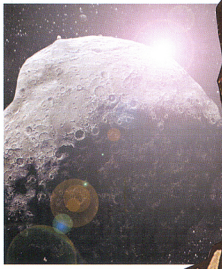
THE SMUGGLER'S ALLIANCE

One of Mara's first enterprises as head of the Smuggler's Alliance grew from a partnership forged with Lando Calrissian. The spice mines at Kessel had finally been liberated from the Empire, and Lando saw an opportunity to turn them into a legitimate and ethical operation. Describing his idea to Mara, he suggested that the Smuggler's Alliance could become the sole distributors of glitterstim spice. She liked the idea and even persuaded the Smuggler's Alliance to help the New Republic during the battle against the Death Star prototype.

Jorj Car'das had been the founding leader of Talon Karrde's organization before he suddenly disappeared from sight, some 15 years before the Battle of Yavin. After the defeat of Admiral Thrawn, Karrde asked Mara and Lando to initiate a search for Car'das. It took over six years, on and off, during which time the two business partners were forced to pretend that their relationship had a more romantic aspect. Mara found this extremely uncomfortable, but she persisted with it out of loyalty to Karrde.

Despite her involvement with the Smuggler's Alliance, Mara still found time to stay in touch with Luke, visiting him from time to time. She even joined his Jedi academy for a handful of days before other responsibilities drew her back to her smuggling friends. Her Force skills, however, remained undeveloped. Little did she know how important they were to become to her in the near future.

SPICE OF LIFE: Mara Jade eventually became head of an organization called the Smuggler's Alliance. In her official capacity, she formed a partnership with Lando Calrissian to mine and distribute the glitterstim spice found on the planet Kessel.



'HARVEST'S WHEN I NEED YOU THE MOST'

LIFE ON THE FARM

MOISTURE FARMS SUCH AS THE LARS HOMESTEAD RELIED ON HARD WORK, VIGILANCE AND CONSTANT MAINTENANCE TO THRIVE IN THE UNFORGIVING ENVIRONMENT OF TATOOINE

LOCATED on the sun-baked saltflats of Tatooine, the Lars homestead was a typical moisture farm supplying water and crops to the towns of Anchorhead and Mos Eisley. Small and isolated in the dusty landscape, anyone looking across the featureless wasteland would scarcely notice its existence. Only the rocket-like protrusions of moisture vaporators and the small cluster of igloo-shaped domes betrayed its presence, because, like most Tatooine dwellings, the farm was built almost entirely underground. No amount of irrigation could allow crops to survive on the scorching surface of Tatooine, where solar activity was as unpredictable as the planet's devastating sandstorms.

The farm consisted primarily of a network of Pretormin GX-8 moisture vaporators – machines that extracted vapour from the atmosphere and condensed it into water, which fusion generators then pumped to underground reservoirs. Having accumulated the water, farmers usually had a choice – sell the water direct to local merchants, or use it to irrigate their underground hydroponics farms. This latter option presented a far greater challenge, but it was one that Owen and Beru Lars met through hard toil and stubborn determination.

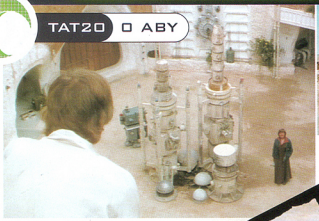
The farm's central complex consisted of an enlarged, open-air plaza carved deep into the bedrock. This subterranean courtyard provided access to a network of underground tunnels that led to the kitchen, living quarters, garage and underground produce gardens. Access to the surface was provided via a dome-covered ramp, which used electrostatic repellers to keep the sands at bay during the dust storms. Located nearby was a circular concourse, which provided a ceiling for the homestead's large underground garage.

No moisture farm would be complete without a collection of droids, and Owen used a small army of agricultural and utility machines to keep the farm operating. Among them were box-like EG-6 power droids, ageing astromech units and multi-limbed treadwells. With little access to genuine droid dealerships, Owen had to rely on the unscrupulous Jawas to supply him with new droids when the old ones gave out. The Jawas visited the farmers regularly, knowing that the settlers had little option but to choose from their motley selection of machines.

Occasionally, Owen managed to purchase a droid which actually reduced his workload, but ultimately droids were no substitute for a proper, human workforce. Owen's droids merely provided a cheap alternative while the farmer struggled to make enough money to hire genuine help.

A LIFE LOOKS LIKE I'M GOING NOWHERE: As he grew older, Luke's workload of maintaining and repairing the moisture farm's vaporators, condensors and droids ceased to satisfy him. The homestead's enclosed courtyard was almost a symbol of his limited horizons.

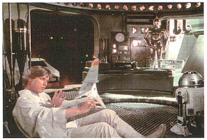
TAT20 0 ABY

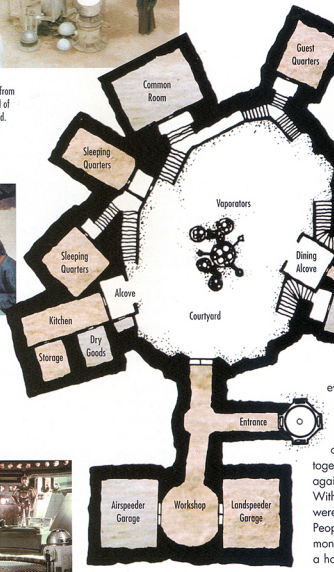


≺ BUT IT'S A WHOLE 'NOTHER YEAR: Unhappy with life at the farm, Luke constantly petitioned his aunt and uncle to allow him to apply to the Academy, but to no avail.

▲ Y GOING UNDERGROUND: Apart from the central, open-air courtyard, almost all of the Lars homestead was built underground. On Tatooine, such developments were necessary to provide a refuge from the planet's harsh and unpredictable climate.

Y I'M NEVER GONNA GET OUT OF HERE: One of Luke's bolt-holes was the garage and workshop area, which housed the family's landspeeder and the old T-16 skyhopper that Luke had received as a gift and rebuilt with Owen's help.





SAFETY IN NUMBERS

Beleaguered by Tusken Raiders (and occasionally rival farmers), security was a prime concern for Owen and other moisture farmers in the area. Raids by the Tuskens had taken a terrible toll in the past, and Owen and Beru were not about to let history repeat itself. The Lars homestead maintained an effective security net, consisting of power fences, early-warning sensors, and 2X-3KPR sentry droids to keep unwanted intruders at bay.

The Tuskens were particularly active at night, and every evening Owen activated the security screen to keep his family safe. In addition, the Lars family formed part of a wider community of human farmers, who banded together to create a united front against Tatooine's less friendly natives. Without the backing of others, farmers were at risk, not only from the Sand People, but also from the Jawas, whose monstrous sandcrawlers could flatten a homestead if sufficiently provoked.

Y ≻ NIGHT-TIME CURFEW: The homestead was constantly secured against the intrusion of unwelcome visitors. By night, the possible presence of Sand People made it too dangerous to venture beyond the perimeter screen.

'HIT THE NOSE!'

PIT DROIDS (DUM UNITS)

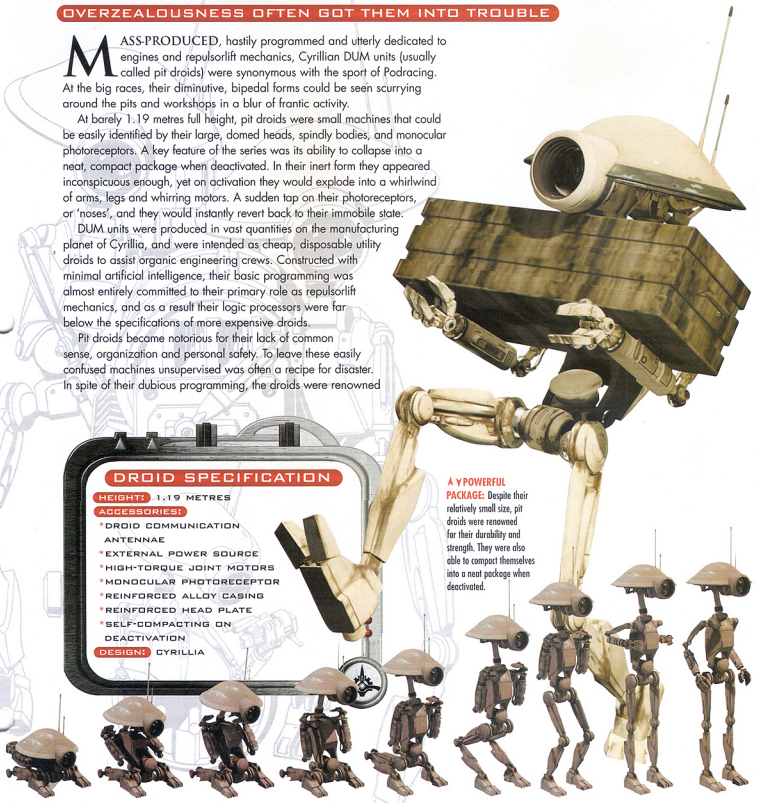
THESE SPRING-LOADED MECHANICS WERE EVER-PRESENT AT PODRACING EVENTS. PROGRAMMED FOR HYPERACTIVITY, THEIR CUSTOMARY OVERZEALOUSNESS OFTEN GOT THEM INTO TROUBLE

MASS-PRODUCED, hastily programmed and utterly dedicated to engines and repulsorlift mechanics, Cyrillian DUM units (usually called pit droids) were synonymous with the sport of Podracing. At the big races, their diminutive, bipedal forms could be seen scurrying around the pits and workshops in a blur of frantic activity.

At barely 1.19 metres full height, pit droids were small machines that could be easily identified by their large, domed heads, spindly bodies, and monocular photoreceptors. A key feature of the series was its ability to collapse into a neat, compact package when deactivated. In their inert form they appeared inconspicuous enough, yet on activation they would explode into a whirlwind of arms, legs and whirring motors. A sudden tap on their photoreceptors, or 'noses', and they would instantly revert back to their immobile state.

DUM units were produced in vast quantities on the manufacturing planet of Cyrillia, and were intended as cheap, disposable utility droids to assist organic engineering crews. Constructed with minimal artificial intelligence, their basic programming was almost entirely committed to their primary role as repulsorlift mechanics, and as a result their logic processors were far below the specifications of more expensive droids.

Pit droids became notorious for their lack of common sense, organization and personal safety. To leave these easily confused machines unsupervised was often a recipe for disaster. In spite of their dubious programming, the droids were renowned



DROID SPECIFICATION

HEIGHT: 1.19 METRES

ACCESSORIES:
- DROID COMMUNICATION ANTENNAE
- EXTERNAL POWER SOURCE
- HIGH-TORQUE JOINT MOTORS
- MONOCULAR PHOTORECEPTOR
- REINFORCED ALLOY CASING
- REINFORCED HEAD PLATE
- SELF-COMPACTING ON DEACTIVATION

DESIGN: CYRILLIA

A POWERFUL PACKAGE: Despite their relatively small size, pit droids were renowned for their durability and strength. They were also able to compact themselves into a neat package when deactivated.

PIT2 32 BBY

< A DROIDS: Pit droids usually worked as part of a crew, but this didn't stop them causing trouble. During the Boonta Eve Classic, DUM 4 found itself sucked into the engine of Ody Mandrell's Podracer.

for their durability and strength. Standard DUM units were constructed from lightweight metals reinforced with hardened alloy casing, and their heavy, bowl-shaped heads were tough enough to withstand the impact of falling machinery or carelessly placed tools. Their high-torque joint motors also provided them with amazing strength, enabling them to lift objects many times their own weight.

Between them, a pair of sufficiently determined pit droids was capable of hefting an entire Podrace turbine in their arms. The droids would happily toil until they either collapsed under the strain, or blew their own circuits from overwork.

DAMAGE LIMITATION

Yet their immense strength and erratic behaviour made a dangerous combination, and many owners of pit droids learned from experience to keep an ion-blaster on hand to incapacitate hyperactive units should they malfunction – a sadly common occurrence. In the event of irreparable droid-senility, disintegration was often the only safe means of disposing of faulty units, as a chaotic pit droid could cause a lot of damage.

At the racetracks, pit droids usually worked as part of a Podracing crew, and were often painted in the colours of their team. Whenever a Pod pulled into the pits, the droids would spring into action, making hasty repairs or replacing parts as quickly as their servo-motors could manage.

The droids communicated in a bizarre machine language of chattering, electronic beeps, which they received using their built-in antennae. Though they made capable mechanics, such was their obsessive zeal that the droids were often a danger to themselves and others. During the Boonta Eve Classic, for example, a particularly absent-minded pit droid named DUM 4 blundered into the path of a still-ignited Podracer engine during a pit stop, and was sucked through the spinning turbine. Fortunately, the droid's sturdy construction enabled it to survive relatively intact. For furious driver Ody Mandrell, however, the race was over.

> TEAM PLAYERS: Although they had a tendency to cause chaos if left to their own devices, pit droids made efficient and capable mechanics and were an essential part of many Podracing teams.

'SOMEBODY GRAB THE WHEEL!'

4 ABY DES1

UBRIKKAN SUPER HAUL BANTHA II DESERT SKIFF

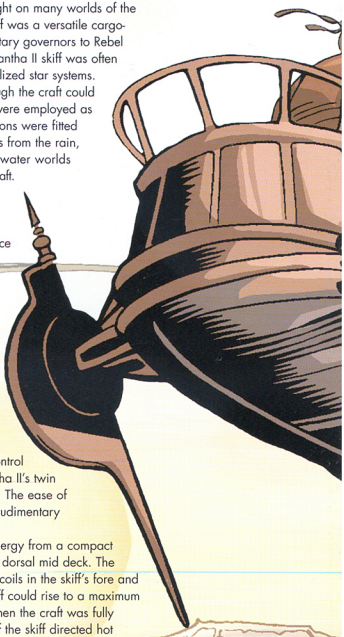
THE SURFACE UTILITY VEHICLE THAT USES REPULSORLIFT ENGINES TO TRAVEL JUST ABOVE THE GROUND

THE Ubrikkan Super Haul Bantha II skiff was a common sight on many worlds of the Outer Rim during the years of the Emperor's reign. The skiff was a versatile cargo-haulage vehicle that found work with everyone from planetary governors to Rebel soldiers and criminal entrepreneurs. A utility repulsorlift craft, the Bantha II skiff was often found in planetside ports or warehouses throughout many industrialized star systems.

The basic Ubrikkan model featured an open-deck design, although the craft could be easily modified for an enclosure. Some Bantha II skiff variants were employed as mass-transit transports carrying paying passengers, and these versions were fitted with up to 16 seats and a cowl-like weather screen to protect riders from the rain, wind or sun. Such models often appeared on resource-poor backwater worlds whose inhabitants were unable to purchase a more suitable transport craft.

As a freight haulier, the Bantha II skiff could manage a maximum deck load of 100 tonnes of cargo, although the volume of carried weight was usually more of a limiting factor than the actual mass of the materials. Magnetic locking plates held the cargo modules in place on the deck before they were secured for flight with netting or straps.

Numerous variations of the basic skiff were built and modified so that no two were identical, but the majority of the Bantha II's internal systems remained the same from craft to craft. A set of magnetic lifter units were fitted as standard in a concealed well beneath the mid deck. These lifters could be deployed from the helm-control podium to pick up and move anything – from large cargo modules to droids – as required.

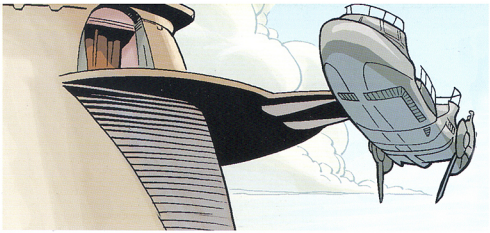


EASY CONTROL

An extremely simple craft to fly, the skiff's controls operated the aft thrust nozzles and repulsor coil lifters via a series of switches, but piloting was done by using two steering yokes either side of the control pedestal at the rear. The yokes were directly connected to the Bantha II's twin steering vanes – through their inputs the skiff could rise, fall or turn. The ease of operation meant that many skiffs had no organic crew at all, and rudimentary labour droids were often used as helmsmen.

Powered by a basic system of repulsorlift coils, the skiff drew energy from a compact antigrav generator concealed in a rectangular unit on the vehicle's dorsal mid deck. The primary drive system was directly below this, and several repulsor coils in the skiff's fore and aft hull provided vertical lift. When full power was applied, the skiff could rise to a maximum altitude of 50 metres, although this height could not be reached when the craft was fully laden. A series of thin, ducted thruster nozzles on the aft midline of the skiff directed hot exhaust gases to provide forward propulsion, and the vehicle was capable of a top speed of around 200 to 250 kilometres per hour, depending on its cargo load.

The Bantha II skiff worked well in its civilian role, although attempts to turn it into a combat craft were underwhelming – the skiff's relatively slow speed and open-deck design made it an easy target. Coupled with a lack of manoeuvrability and a weak hull, a random shot could knock out the skiff's steering vane or scramble one of its repulsorlift coils. Bantha IIs were often prone to founder and pitch sharply when an antigrav unit malfunctioned, and skiffs that came under any serious attack were usually destroyed in very short order.



DANGEROUS LIMITATIONS: The favoured form of transport of Jabba the Hutt, the Ubrikkan Super Haul Bantha II skiff was a powerful cargo ship capable of carrying heavy loads over vast distances. Its open deck and slow speed, however, meant that it was vulnerable to attack and virtually useless as a combat vehicle.

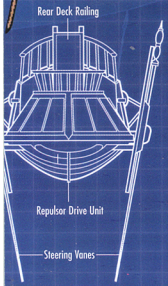
STEERING VANES: Two vertical sail-like vanes flanked the skiff at the rear quarter. These semi-circular fins were manually controlled by the craft's helmsman via two steering yokes on the control pedestal, directing the vehicle as required.

➢ AT THE HELM: The control pedestal on a cargo skiff is fitted with rudimentary dials and twin steering yokes that can alter the pitch and flare of the skiff's flight vanes. If the helmsman has to leave the controls for any reason, the skiff can easily spin out of control.

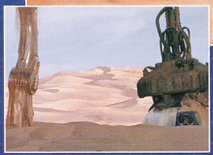
SIDE VIEW

➢ YWEEQUAY SKIFF GUARDS: Jabba the Hutt's skiffs were manned by several crew members, including, usually, at least five Weequay guards. These protectors were, however, of no use to the crime lord when he came up against Luke Skywalker in the wastes of the Dune Sea.

A EXTENDABLE GANGPLANK: One of only two modifications made by Jabba's technicians to these repulsorlift craft, the extendable gangplanks fitted to the desert skiff were purely for the purposes of Jabba's amusement.



FRONT VIEW



A ELECTROMAGNETIC LIFTERS: Skiffs are built for cargo haulage, and a pair of powerful electromagnetic lifter plates is concealed in the ventral hull to assist in loading and unloading operations. Lando Calrissian used the lifters to rescue the droids R2-D2 and C-3PO during the escape from Jabba the Hutt's clutches.

VEHICLE SPECIFICATION

TYPE:	UBRIKKAN BANTHA II CARGO SKIFF
LENGTH:	9.5 METRES
SPEED:	250 KPH
OWNER:	JABBA THE HUTT
AFFILIATION:	JABBA THE HUTT

'LET'S GO! AND DON'T FORGET THE DROIDS'

4 ABY DES2

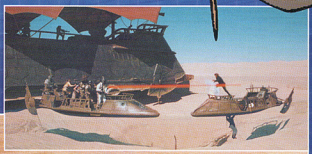
UBRIKKAN SUPER HAUL BANTHA II DESERT SKIFF

JABBA USED A CUSTOMIZED BANTHA II SKIFF TO FERRY LUKE SKYWALKER AND HIS FRIENDS TO THEIR DOOM

JABBA the Hutt, the notorious criminal kingpin of Tatooine, favoured the Ubrikkan design and used several Bantha II skiffs in his illegal endeavours. As well as performing escort duties for his personal excursions around the planet, Jabba's men used desert-adapted skiffs as transports for raiding parties or for clandestine shipments of contraband cargoes from the Hutt's freighters. Jabba had a fondness for Ubrikkan vehicles and vessels, and both his sail barge, the *Khetanna*, and his highly modified luxury space yacht were built by the company.

Ubrikkan was popular with many rich Hutts, thanks to its manufacture of opulent repulsorlift boats including caravels, which were a frequent sight on worlds like Nar Shadaa and Nal Hutta. The company also specialized in constructing short-range military flyers such as the agile Talon I combat cloud car. Jabba directed his mechanics to add a layer of armour to the Bantha II skiffs in his service, but poor thrust-to-weight ratios meant that the thin sheath of protection was still barely enough to deflect a few glancing blaster hits – one or two well-aimed shots could easily bring one of Jabba's skiffs crashing down in seconds.

The skiffs in Jabba's fleet would typically have a six-person crew, with Weequay or Nikto guards armed with blasters or force pikes, and a single helmsman, such as the Skrilling known as Pote Snitkin. On journeys across the Tatooine deserts in his sail barge, Jabba would usually have at least two skiffs travelling in a close protection escort formation. He also had extendable gangplanks attached to his fleet of Bantha IIs, a modification that would be the last thing many of his victims saw before toppling into the Sarlacc's pit in the wastes of the Dune Sea. Jabba was greatly entertained by this activity, although it was his attempt to force the Jedi Luke Skywalker to walk the plank that led to his death only moments later.



← YMOVE HIM INTO POSITION: Jabba the Hutt's sail barge, the *Khetanna*, was also built by Ubrikkan. But when the crime lord tried to force Luke Skywalker to walk the gangplank on one of his skiffs, both he and his beloved barge were destroyed.

A HAMPTA SCAN

KFRONE